



Continuum

Journal of Media & Cultural Studies

ISSN: 1030-4312 (Print) 1469-3666 (Online) Journal homepage: <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ccon20>

Stop the boats! Moral panic in Australia over asylum seekers

Greg Martin

To cite this article: Greg Martin (2015) Stop the boats! Moral panic in Australia over asylum seekers, Continuum, 29:3, 304-322, DOI: [10.1080/10304312.2014.986060](https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2014.986060)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2014.986060>



Published online: 17 Feb 2015.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 9499



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Citing articles: 15 View citing articles [↗](#)

Stop the boats! Moral panic in Australia over asylum seekers

Greg Martin*

Department of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Sydney, RC Mills Building (A26), Camperdown, NSW 2006, Australia

This article analyses the social reaction to asylum seekers in Australia through the lens of moral panic theory. It argues that the most recent campaigns to deter ‘boat people’ from arriving in Australia have all the hallmarks of a classic moral panic, which have been successful because they resonate with deep-rooted anxieties about Australia’s national identity and way of life, relating, among other things, to fear of Asian ‘invasion’ and concern with multiculturalism. However, the article seeks to extend moral panic theory to propose that rather than being episodic (as the original moral panic model suggests), moral panics over asylum seekers, at least, are now relatively permanent, which, it is argued, is largely a function of the inexorable ‘war on terror’ where the figure of the Muslim-terrorist-refugee is constructed as a transnational folk devil. On the other hand, the article argues that while resistance to moral panics seems to challenge the view that moral panics are forged of consensus (a key moral panic ingredient), societal reactions to refugees do resemble classic moral panics insofar as the negative response is broad and unified.

Introduction

On 11 February 2014, the Australian government introduced a new campaign to deter would-be asylum seekers from attempting to arrive in Australia by boat. Using the slogan, ‘No way. They will not make Australia home’, an image ([Figure 1](#)) was published on the website of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection of a small boat in rough seas next to a map of Australia with a line struck through it. Some of the text accompanying the image also included the first official concession the Coalition government was turning asylum seeker boats back ([Laughland 2014](#)), stating, ‘Don’t waste your money – people smugglers are lying. The Australian government has instructed the Australian Defence Force to turn back boats where it is safe to do so’.

The campaign also included a graphic novel, apparently aimed at potential Afghan asylum seekers, which was first launched on the Customs and Border Protection website in November 2013. The images showed asylum seekers suffering medical problems and depression in offshore detention centres ([Figure 2](#)).

The Coalition government’s campaign largely aped the one launched on 19 July 2013 by the then Labor Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, in the run up to the Federal election of early September 2013, when targeting asylum seekers was a common electioneering platform, with the Coalition promising that, if elected, they would, ‘Stop the boats’. The Rudd government’s campaign included full-page newspaper and radio advertisements ([Jabour 2013a, 2013b](#)), stating, ‘If you come here by boat without a visa you won’t be settled in Australia’. The advertisements contained a link to the website of what was then called the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, including [Figure 3](#) and accompanying text, stating, ‘if you travel to Australia by boat with no visa, you will

*Email: greg.martin@sydney.edu.au



Figure 1. The Coalition's 'no way' campaign. *Source:* Laughland (2014). © Australian Customs and Border Protection Service.

not be settled here', but 'will be sent to Papua New Guinea or Nauru', where, '[i]f found to be a refugee, you'll be settled'.

Labor's 'No Visa' campaign was a de facto return to the 'Pacific Solution' of the Howard era, instigated by the continued, and sometimes fatal (Hope 2012), attempts by



Figure 2. Page from graphic novel aimed at potential asylum seekers. *Source:* Laughland (2014). © Australian Customs and Border Protection Service.

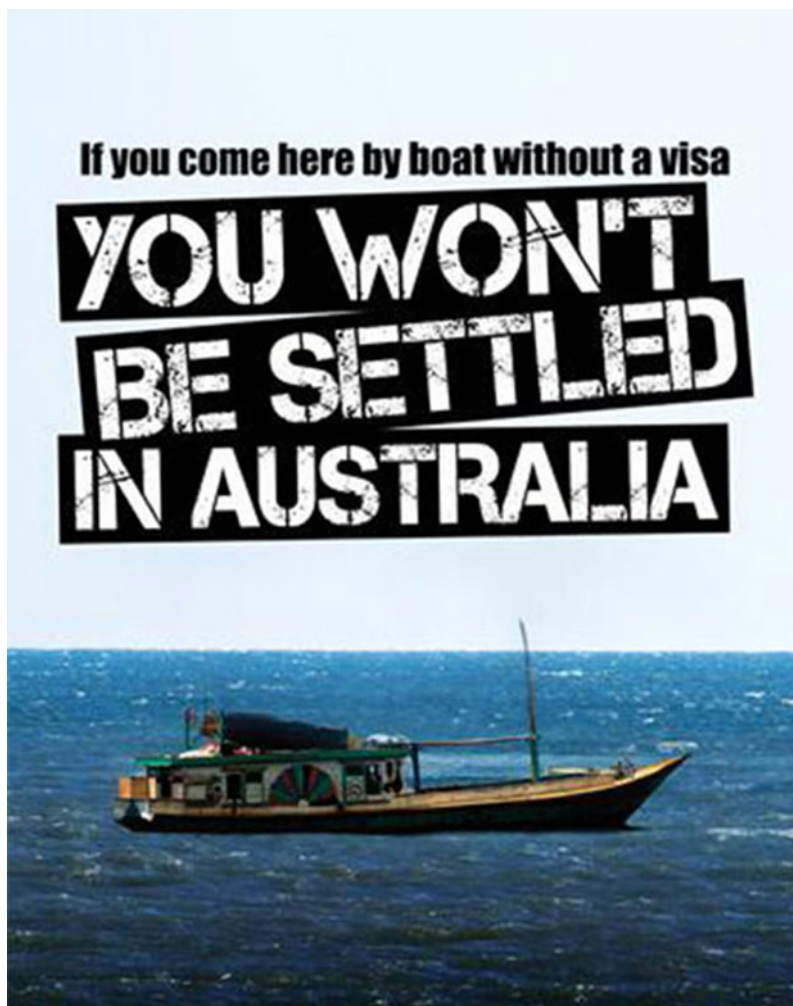


Figure 3. Labor's 'no visa' campaign. *Source:* Jabour (2013a). © Australian Customs and Border Protection Service.

asylum seekers to arrive in Australia via Christmas Island, as well as the Australian High Court's ruling that the 'Malaysian Solution' of the former Gillard Labor government was invalid because Malaysia was not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its Protocol, and was therefore not legally bound to provide protections and access to effective procedures for asylum seekers that are required by the *Migration Act 1958* (Cth) (O'Sullivan 2011).

Cohen (2011, 242), who devised the moral panic concept, has argued that 'anything connected with immigration, migrants, multicultural absorption, refugees, border controls and asylum seekers' will be the most important site for moral panics, not least because '[t]his subject is more political, more edgy and more amenable to violence'. In the British context, argues Cohen (1972/2002, xix), reactions to refugees and asylum seekers 'are more overtly political than any others'. According to him, that has to do with problems caused by 'global political changes', because of a long history of such reactions in British

political culture, and because ‘successive British governments have not only led the legitimated public hostility, but spoken with a voice indistinguishable from the tabloid press’ (Cohen 1972/2002, xix).

The Australian example bears more than just a passing resemblance to the British case. In Australia, although there have been subtle distinctions between the two main political parties, such as, in recent times, the Coalition’s focus on asylum seekers and people smugglers, and Labor’s sole focus on smugglers (Toohey 2014, 11), as well as some humanitarian concessions, such as Kevin Rudd’s short-lived compassion for asylum seekers (Toohey 2014, 20), as Cohen (1972/2002, xix) observes, the social reaction to refugees and asylum seekers has tended to involve ‘a single, virtually uninterrupted message of hostility and rejection’. However, almost in opposition to that statement, he rejects the idea that we have entered an era of ‘permanent moral panic’, which he dismisses as an oxymoron (Cohen 1972/2002, xxx).

A principal aim of this article is to remain as faithful as possible to the moral panic concept as originally conceived by Cohen, largely because it is a concept that can be, and has been, ‘frequently misinterpreted’ (Jewkes 2011, 97). Significantly, however, the article seeks to extend moral panic theory to argue that, at least insofar as social reactions to refugees and asylum seekers are concerned, we do indeed appear to have entered a time of permanent moral panic. There are two particular ways moral panics over asylum seekers can be thought of as relatively permanent.

On the one hand, the moral panic over asylum seekers in Australia can be considered a classic moral panic in the sense described originally by Cohen (1972/2002, 1), who defined a moral panic as an *episodic* or *periodic* condition experienced when a group posing a threat to societal values or interests is demonized by the mass media and society’s moral custodians. On the other hand, the societal reaction to asylum seekers in Australia departs from the conventional meaning of moral panic because, like examples elsewhere, the response is premised on persistent and recurring fears and anxieties.

This relates to the first way to conceive of such panics as permanent. For, although they are subject to volatility, exploding into the headlines at key strategic moments (such as during election campaigns), refugee moral panics are fed by dormant moral sentiments and cultural sensibilities that lay in abeyance until resurrected by moral entrepreneurs (e.g. the press and politicians) when deemed ripe for invoking. This notion of ‘abeyance’ is borrowed from social movement theory, where it is used by Taylor (1989, 761) to refer to structures, networks or communities that enable social movements to ‘sustain themselves in non-receptive political environments and provide continuity from one stage of mobilization to another’. In the moral panic context, the concept of abeyance helps explain the relative persistence of hostile sentiments directed at refugees and asylum seekers.

However, the idea of abeyance as applied here to moral panics constitutes an inversion of the way it is used in social movement theory. While social movements thrive in environments where the prevailing political climate is relatively open and there are political opportunities to include powerless groups, moral panics tend generally to spike when opportunities – such as those provided at election time – exist for the political elite to exclude and demonize certain groups. In the case of moral panics over asylum seekers and refugees, deep-seated anxieties, fears and concerns remain suspended until resurrected at suitably opportune moments.

Therefore, just as the reaction to refugees and asylum seekers in Britain has a ‘long history’ (Cohen 1972/2002, xix), so the response in Australia reflects and resonates with broader historical processes and deep-rooted anxieties relating, among other things, to a longstanding fear of Asian ‘invasion’, concern over multiculturalism and the perceived

impact of these upon Australia's national character, identity and way of life. Throughout this article, a variety of material relating to these and other relevant issues is discussed to provide a historical context within which to frame the analysis of the boat people moral panic in Australia.

A second way moral panics over refugees and asylum seekers can be considered relatively permanent relates to what Cohen (1972/2002, xix) refers to above as the 'global political changes' he believes have contributed to the hostile reaction to asylum seekers in Britain. Most prominent among these are the transformations that have occurred since the terror attacks of 11 September 2001. In the post-9/11 world, hostility is now regularly directed towards the composite folk devil identity of the Muslim-terrorist-refugee, which is itself part of a process of 'global Islamophobia' (Morgan and Poynting 2012). Hence, as Noble (2012, 217) argues, despite the increasing complexity of the existing moral order, 'folk devils continue to be named and the dynamics of hostility, denunciation and disproportion remain, especially in relation to Islam'. Indeed, the latest round of anti-boat people rhetoric and policy in Australia began after 9/11 in the lead-up to the 2001 Federal election, when 'the Iranians, Afghans and Iraqis were seen as one generic Muslim morass' (Toohey 2014, 16).

For Garland (2008, 14), elections can provide a key 'precipitating cause' of moral panics because they 'have to do with transitions in the social, economic or moral order of the society'. Periods of uncertainty such as these create fertile conditions for the creation of moral panics, which have the 'ability to find points of resonance with wider anxieties' (Cohen 1972/2002, xxx; Garland 2007, 4). However, in the post-9/11 context, where, it has been observed, exception increasingly becomes the norm (Agamben 2005), moral panic over asylum seekers and refugees has also become normalized. There is now a permanent state of alarm; refugees and asylum seekers are equated with Muslim terrorists, in what has arguably become a *global moral panic* over fundamentalist Islam, which demonizes all people of Middle Eastern origin (or appearance). In many respects, this constitutes an intensification of Poynting et al.'s (2004, 3) observation that 'in contemporary Australia we are witnessing the emergence of the "Arab Other" as the pre-eminent "folk devil" of our time'.

Before proceeding with this analysis in more depth, a final few points about conceptual clarity and methodology should be flagged. To properly apply the moral panic concept, and not misinterpret it in the way Jewkes (2011, 97) describes, this article draws from Goode and Ben-Yehuda's (1994) distillation of Cohen's original model into the following five key moral panic criteria: (i) *concern* (some reported conduct or event sparks anxiety); (ii) *hostility* (the perpetrators are portrayed as folk devils); (iii) *consensus* (the negative reaction is broad and unified); (iv) *disproportionality* (the extent of the conduct, or the threat it poses, is exaggerated); (v) *volatility* (the media's reporting and the associated panic emerge suddenly, but can dissipate quickly too)' (Garland 2008, 11, original emphasis). The reader will observe these key moral panic ingredients applied at relevant moments throughout the article. It must be said, however, that moral panic theory does not always neatly fit moral panic reality. Accordingly, the methodological approach employed here is akin to that of the cultural analyst who:

must follow the "imbroglios" wherever they take us, shuttling back and forth within a network of ideas [...] The object in this sense is not merely the subject of layered interpretations but is, in essence, the infolding and unfolding of ideas and perceptions (Bennett 2012, 9).

Lastly, to Goode and Ben-Yehuda's summary, Garland (2008, 11) has added two elements he believes are central to Cohen's original meaning of moral panic. First, the social

reaction must have a *moral dimension*, ‘particularly the introspective soul-searching that accompanies these episodes’, and, secondly, the ‘deviant’ conduct in question must have a *symptomatic quality* (Garland 2008, 11); that is to say, the reaction of society’s guardians or moral entrepreneurs goes beyond the immediate ‘problem’, which is regarded as a sign of deep and disturbing social malaise (see Garland 2007, 4; Garland 2008, 11). These two qualities point to the true essence of the underlying disturbance, namely the threat to an established value system and fear a cherished way of life is jeopardized (Garland 2008, 11). As argued below, this is no less so in Australia, although the concluding parts of the article consider how resistance to moral panics highlights the limits of consensual *attitudes* about refugees and asylum seekers (Cover 2013), and how an ethical approach to cultural studies might seek to engage with moral panics over refugees in ‘a corrected version of morality’ (Zylinska 2004a) via the performance of a ‘responsible immigration politics’ (Zylinska 2004b, 531).

Disproportionate social reaction

... what makes Australia unique is the disconnect between how prominently boat people feature in the national dialogue, on the one hand, and the actual scale of the problem, on the other. (Mogelson 2013)

According to Garland (2008, 21), ‘[t]he point of departure for any moral panic analysis is the claim that a particular reaction is somehow disproportionate to the deviance it condemns’. Another way of putting this is that the social reaction is ‘proportionate’ to the underlying anxieties expressed (Garland 2008, 28). For Garland, the question of what the reaction is proportionate to ought to be a practical one, ‘often managed by careful use of appropriate data and methods of investigation’ (Garland 2008, 22). In Cohen’s (1972/2002, xxviii) own example, knowledge of the ‘real’ statistical data should render ‘claims about “the country being flooded with bogus asylum seekers”’ out of proportion.

Disproportionality can operate in a variety of ways. For instance, Perera (2009a) has shown how, in Australia, it is evident in the disproportionately punitive measures that are imposed on people arriving by boat, such as prohibitive fines, imprisonment in substandard conditions and the burning of their boats (Perera 2009a, 136). Moreover, she shows how disproportionality manifests in:

[r]enewed anxieties over the legitimacy of the Australian state, unresolved issues of native title, and the sense of Anglo-Australia as an anomalous racial/ethnic presence in the region all [of which] contribute to the disproportionate and hysterical response to the arrival of a few hundred asylum seekers in its surrounding waters or “backyard” (Perera 2009a, 62).

Disproportionality can also be measured by interrogating statistical data. In 1997, there were approximately 51,000 people unlawfully in Australia due to having overstayed their visas, most arriving as visitors (76%), with the highest numbers coming from the UK (11%), the USA (9.3%), the Philippines (6.9%) and China (5.4%) (McMaster 2001, 68). By contrast, boat people represented less than 0.01% of all arrivals (McMaster 2001, 3). More recent figures confirm the real ‘threat’ to border security and immigration control is posed less by boat people than by ‘illegals’ arriving by plane:

... plane arrivals from the United States (5080) and Britain (3610) are near the top of the list of those in the country without a valid visa ... There are 13 times more illegal immigrants than there are asylum seekers in detention who have arrived by boat ... There are 4446 detained boat people, the largest national grouping of which are Afghans (1422). Three in four of the 58,400 visa overstayers came on tourist or holiday-working visas; one in seven arrived as students and one in 15 disappeared after being granted temporary residency. (Kemp and Mickelburgh 2011; see also Mickelburgh 2011)

It is therefore British nationals who pose the single biggest ‘risk’ to Australian border security, since they are more likely than any other foreign citizens to overstay visas in Australia. Indeed, as Guild (2009, 15) shows, while the global average for staying in a country beyond the permitted period is 1.22%, the average for British nationals in Australia is 1.58%, which means ‘the country whose nationals, objectively in both numeric and percentage terms, represent the greatest risk of overstaying their visit visa in Australia is Britain’. Apparently, this is a fact well known to top officials, such as Federal parliamentarian, Chris Evans, who, while Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, ‘told the Australian Parliament that most visa overstayers were English men under 25 who had simply enjoyed themselves too much to leave’ (Clark 2009; see also Geoghegan 2005; Mickelborough 2011).

Rather than being a simple question of double standards based on race and geography, as Perera (2009a, 97) suggests, there is a wider normative process at work here, which accords with Garland’s idea that the negative social reaction to folk devils must have a *moral dimension*. Thus, as Guild (2009, 15) argues, ‘[i]f the category of illegal immigrant were one of neutral normative content then the efforts of the Australian authorities to reduce overstaying of visit visas would be directed against British citizens’. The fact that such efforts are not forthcoming points to the fiction of national unity that lies at the heart of the myth of ‘white Australia’. Representations of border control create anxiety and ambivalence by disrupting the fantasy of a coherent white Australian nation, which ultimately ‘exposes the sore that is colonisation – the original unauthorised crossing’ (Elder 2003, 222). Accordingly, the discursive logic of ‘white Australia’ is ‘to disavow the illegality and alien status of Australian-Britons’ (Elder 2003, 224).

The lack of reaction to overstayers from Britain and other Anglo nations, and overreaction to boat people, seems then to suggest there is some *symptomatic quality* to the ‘deviant’ conduct in question whereby ‘[t]he problem when it is fully unveiled typically bears little relation to the reaction it provokes’ (Garland 2007, 5). Indeed, in Australia, the fear, anxiety and hatred – *hostility* being another key component of moral panics – refugees generate have been explained by Perera (2009a) as a function of the convergence of several factors. First, there are anxieties attached to being an island-nation, which in the case of ‘island-Australia’ are an intensified version of the profoundly insular Westphalian vision of the modern nation-state (Perera 2009a, 39). According to Perera (2009a, 13), Australia’s ‘insular state’ is compounded by its geopolitical status in the Asia-Pacific region as ‘Gulliver among Lilliputians’. She shows, in turn, how this has manifest at various historical junctures, including in anxieties over Asian invasion generally (Perera 2009a, 99–100), and, more specifically, Japanese invasion during the Second World War (Perera 2009a, 106). More recently, it has come to the fore as paranoia triggered by boat people, which has led to a government policy not only structured by fear, but also devoid of logic, as evident in ‘[t]he policy of compulsorily imprisoning asylum seekers who arrive by boat but not those who seek asylum at airports after arriving by plane’ (Perera 2009a, 97).

In this way, moral panics obfuscate ‘real’ issues (e.g. Britons overstaying visit visas), and, as such, serve a diversionary function, deflecting attention away from actual problems. In certain respects, the contemporary Australian example is analogous to the situation in 1970s Britain, as described in *Policing the Crisis* (Hall et al. 1978), where a pre-emptive escalation of social control against a minority population served to divert public attention away from a looming socio-economic crisis that threatened the legitimacy of the state. In that case, this entailed the creation of the ‘black mugger’ as folk devil. In Australia, the ‘No Visa’ campaign arguably represented a last ditch attempt by Labor to

win votes in the face of unfavourable polls. However, the fact that stopping the boats was also a campaigning policy for the Coalition demonstrates too that at critical moments, such as during elections, this particular issue is often used as a populist political drawcard, pointing to Garland's (2008, 14) idea, discussed above, that elections can be a 'precipitating cause' of moral panics.

A cherished way of life in jeopardy

The diversionary function of moral panics indicates there is something underlying the *volatility* of social reactions to folk devils, who 'are not randomly selected' but 'are cultural scapegoats whose deviant conduct appals onlookers so powerfully precisely because it relates to personal fears and unconscious wishes' (Garland 2008, 15). Such a process might also involve the development of collective unconscious denial and projection whereby 'the emergence of a specific *bête noire* is over-determined by pre-existing conflicts' (Garland 2008, 15, original emphasis). Accordingly, this section of the article shows how the present Australian anxiety over boat people is a manifestation of *concern* – another key ingredient in moral panics – about threats to the Australian way of life posed by immigration, multiculturalism and invasion.

In many ways, this is a legacy of Australia's post-1945 racially exclusivist immigration policy championed by Immigration Minister, Arthur Calwell, who, under the slogan 'populate or perish', expressed his 'hope that for every foreign migrant there will be ten people from the United Kingdom' (Calwell quoted in McMaster 2001, 43). According to Galligan and Chesterman (1999, 76–77), Australia's 'deliberate eschewing of citizenship in favour of subjecthood' to Britain has led to a situation whereby 'contemporary Australians have no core notion of positive citizenship upon which to draw'. For Perera (2009b, 653), that has meant 'the constituent elements of Australian citizenship' tend to be defined negatively in terms of 'exclusion of non-white subjects and the racial link to British ancestry'. The Australian citizenship test serves to demonstrate this.

Introduced under the Howard government in 2006, the test requires a basic level of English language skills and knowledge of the Australian way of life. Significantly, it links the neoliberal project to citizenship formation by emphasizing the virtues of self-reliance, flexibility, enterprise and discipline, thus favouring skilled migration at the expense of multiculturalism and humanitarianism (Perera 2009a, 153–154). Thus, the citizenship test, as originally conceived, reflected John Howard's belief that 'a federation of cultures coexisting is unrealistic', and that there should not be 'any diminution of the mainstream Australian culture'; in essence, the test reflected Howard's own value system, namely 'that you bring people from everywhere and they all unite behind a set of Australian values' (Australian Broadcasting Association 2011). Contrary to those who, like former Labor Prime Minister, Paul Keating, were 'extremely critical of the impact of white civilisation on indigenous people' (Howard 2009), Howard sought self-consciously to construct an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983) that positively embraced the nation's achievements:

The principal objective I had was to build a narrative about the Australian achievement that was positive. That was my objective. You would achieve that by the language you use, how you react to particular events, the emphasis you'd place on the history of the country, the emphasis you place on symbols. You achieve it by using the body corporate, if you like, of the prime ministership to talk about the Australian achievement. And it can have an influence. (Howard 2009)

One of the most significant ways Howard achieved his objective was through the jingoistic language of war. He did this most notably in a speech delivered on the eve of Remembrance Day in 2003 at Australia House in London. In that address, he emphasized the strong and enduring links between Australia and Britain, but also Australia's sense of having a separate national character – the 'Anzac spirit', which has at its heart the peculiarly Australian virtue of 'mateship' – formed during the First World War at Gallipoli in Turkey (Howard 2003). For Perera (2009a, 106), this 'cultural revalorization of war' reinforced a perceived need to defend the Australian way of life 'from the insidious threats of "multiculturalism" and globalization'; anxieties that 'collected around the figures of the non-white migrant and asylum seeker' (Perera 2009b, 653; see also Tsiolkas 2013, 24). Above all, 'the campaign to place war at the centre of national life heightened the sense of a nation constantly under siege' (Perera 2009a, 107).

Ostensibly this process serves to bolster feelings of national belonging. However, when it is accompanied by the 'manipulation of the politics of fear [it] ultimately undermines rather produces social cohesion in a culturally diverse society like Australia' (Poynting et al. 2004, 3). In relation to the Arab Other, this has led to collective expressions of racial hatred like that witnessed during the Cronulla riot, when thousands of 'white' Australians, fuelled by alcohol, attacked anyone of 'Middle Eastern appearance' at Sydney's Cronulla beach on 11 December 2005 (Poynting 2006). On the other hand, it has led to forms of 'banal nationalism' (Billig 1995), evident, for instance, in 'the repeated avowal of the fundamental goodness and decency of Australians' (Perera 2009a, 107). Central here are the notions of fairness or a 'fair go' and 'Aussie luck', the latter deriving from the title of Horne's (1964) classic, *The Lucky Country*, which although originally intended 'as a warning and an indictment [...] has long since acquired a self-congratulatory nationalist gloss' (Perera 2009a, 156). Indeed, Kevin Rudd (2008, 170) highlighted fairness as an Australian value in his apology to the Stolen Generations, for whom, he said, 'there was no fair go at all'. Apparently, such an appeal to fairness does not extend to refugees. Despite the fact that Australia is under-populated, takes in comparatively few refugees (Mogelson 2013; Pilger 2013; Tsiolkas 2013, 29) and is a prosperous country where most are lucky, it has been observed, '[w]e are not good at sharing our luck, and we have a strange habit of thinking that those who are less lucky must be, in some way, responsible for their own misfortunes' (Burnside 2013).

In moral panic terminology, the *hostility* directed towards the *disproportionate* 'threat' or 'problem' of boat people (folk devils) is *symptomatic* of abiding fears and anxieties of 'ordinary Australians' (see McIver 2009). Although Australia is apparently a land of 'no worries', the *concern* coalesces in the prosaic space of the backyard – a site exemplifying the pleasures and rewards of the Anglo-Australian way of life, complete with its barbecues, swimming pools, Hills Hoists, trampolines, dunnies and cricket games – which is to be defended from the imminent danger of invasion (Perera 2009a, 129–130). It is this typically Australian dream that the Aussie battler seeks to defend, but it is also a dream asylum seekers wish to share, and, despite Australian government efforts to deter them, they are prepared to take the risk to do so, not believing they will be turned away (Mogelson 2013; Toohey 2014).

Persistent panic

As stated in the introduction, Cohen himself has proffered somewhat contradictory comments on the possibilities for permanent moral panics, simultaneously dismissing the notion as oxymoronic (Cohen 1972/2002, xxx), as well as stating that moral panics

directed at refugees and asylum seekers are different from others, since ‘although there have been intermittent panics about specific newsworthy episodes, the overall narrative is a single, virtually uninterrupted message of hostility and rejection’ (Cohen 1972/2002, xix). It appears, then, that the refugee example reveals the more than *episodic* nature of moral panics – as originally conceived by Cohen (1972/2002, 1). For, it shows how the refugee issue is always bubbling away beneath the surface; periods of dormancy and abeyance interspersed with spasmodic volatility. In this way, it might be considered a *quiet* construction, ‘where claims-makers are professionals, experts or bureaucrats, working in organisations and with no public or mass media exposure’ (Cohen 1972/2002, xxiii), which, on occasion, rears up to become a *noisy* construction, heard loud and in public, ‘and may be associated with a single sensational case’ (Cohen 1972/2002, xxiii).

The quiet persistence of the moral panic over asylum seekers in the Australian context is evidenced by the fact that long before the resurfacing of the issue during the 2013 Federal election, the Australian government had been campaigning to stop the flow of asylum seekers. We see this in Figure 4, which depicts the aftermath of a 2010 suicide bombing in Quetta – the Pakistani city near Afghanistan, well known as a transit point for would-be Afghan asylum seekers – which is dotted with billboards, paid for by the Australian government, reading, ‘All illegal routes to Australia are closed to Afghans’.

The persistence of the moral panic over boat people in Australia is also evidenced by the fact that the 2013 election was the ‘sixth successive election where the asylum seeker issue [lay] at the heart of the choice the electorate must make’ (Tsiolkas 2013, 29; see also Cohen 1972/2002, xix). Indeed, the more recent concern attached to asylum seekers stretches back to the 2001 Federal election, which was dubbed ‘the *Tampa* election’, for its association with the controversy surrounding the Australia government’s decision to refuse the Norwegian freighter *MV Tampa* permission to land at Christmas Island after it had rescued refugees from a sinking vessel (Price and Nethery 2012, 149). Ultimately, the case for habeas corpus was decided by the Full Court of the Federal Court of Australia,



Figure 4. Australian government advertisement in Quetta, Pakistan. Source: Belford (2012). © Banaras Khan/Getty Images.

which decided by a 2:1 majority that, under s 61 of the *Constitution*, the Australian government has an executive power to exclude and expel aliens (Flynn and LaForgia 2002, 36; Winterton 2003, 429). In the leading judgment, Justice French (now Chief Justice of the High Court) determined that:

The power to determine who may come into Australia is so central to its sovereignty that it is not to be supposed that the Government of the nation would lack under the power conferred upon it directly by the *Constitution*, the ability to prevent people not part of the Australian community, from entering. (*Ruddock v Vadarlis* [2001] FCA 1329, [193])

Interestingly, this line of reasoning echoed John Howard's infamous statement of the time that, 'We will decide who comes into this country and the circumstances in which they come' (Howard quoted in Perera 2009a, 43; see also Toohey 2014, 19), which is, in fact, a sentiment stretching back to Federation (Elder 2003, 221), and one that was subsequently expressed by Tony Abbott in the 2013 election when he said, 'This is our country and we determine who comes here' (Benson, Novak, and Scarr 2013). Following *Tampa*, Australia also experienced the 'Children Overboard' affair, where photographs (subsequently found to be false) were produced by the Australian Navy of asylum seekers throwing their children into the water in an apparently deliberate attempt to engage Australia's protection obligations under international law (Banham and Metherell 2002; Tazreiter 2010, 213). The events surrounding the 2001 Federal election then ensured that in future elections the issue of boat people and border protection had 'an already sensitized, primed public audience', which, according to Garland (2008, 14), is a key 'facilitating condition' of moral panics.

The Australian experience also appears to confirm Garland's (2007, 5) view that moral panics 'can be isolated events, or they can form part of a series, each one building on the other'. In this sense, as Cohen argues (1972/2002, xix), '[t]here is a constant background screen, interspersed with vivid little tableaux': 'Children Overboard', 'Stop the Boats', and so on. The political strategy here, common to all of Australia's major political parties – thus demonstrating *consensus*, which is a key moral panic ingredient – has been to restrict the public's exposure to 'asylum tales' (Toohey 2014, 34); to dehumanize boat people, who remain 'rather frightening statistics – not human beings with faces, stories, troubles and hopes' (Marr 2007, 41; see also Burnside 2013). One of the most recent attempts to dehumanize refugees and keep information about them from the public entails the use of secret processes for pre-screening asylum seekers (Reilly and LaForgia 2013).

Transnational folk devil/global moral panic

Although '[a]nxiety about the edges and extremities of the geo-body' (Perera 2009a, 34), such as the beach and ocean coastline, are certainly central to the social reaction to boat people in Australia, metaphorical portrayals of refugees pertaining to *water* (Cohen 1972/2002, xx) are generally not uncommon. According to Cohen (1972/2002, xx), '[t]he "naturalization" of particular metaphors can blur the boundaries between the literal and the non-literal', whereby metaphors of tides, waves and floods 'serve to dehumanize migrants and refugees while exaggerating the size, scale and threat of the phenomenon' (Welch and Schuster 2005, 400). In Australia, this was captured most vividly in a television advertisement broadcast by the opposition Liberal Party during the 2013 Federal election campaign (Figure 5), where it was claimed since Kevin Rudd's last stint as Prime Minister – when he apparently dismantled the country's border protection policies – 45,000 boat people have 'flooded' into Australia.

Aas (2007, 289) argues media portrayals of immigrants, as bogus and illegal, are heightened in the post-9/11 context, such that '[a]sylum seekers have in many aspects



Figure 5. Screenshot of Liberal Party election campaign ad presenting 'the facts Kevin Rudd would have us forget'. Source: Liberal Party TV (2013).

become populations one needs to be protected *from*, rather than people who need protection' (Aas 2007, 289, original emphasis). We see this in the Australian case, which John Pilger (2013) describes as a 'propaganda war on refugees' waged by governments and the Murdoch dominated media, whereby '[v]ast, sparsely populated Australia demands "protection" from refugees and asylum seekers of whom fewer than 15,000 were settled last year – 0.99% of the world's total'.

Globalizing processes and events such as the terror attacks of 11 September 2001 have caused Bauman to observe 'an asylum/terrorist hysteria' (Bauman 2004, 54), with the media focusing upon this 'newly made-in-hell marriage' (Bauman 2004, 58). In a similar vein, Young (2005, 104) has commented that 'the time of transient moral panic is long past', as these circumstances indicate we are in a state of 'permanent moral panic'. In combination, these developments suggest moral panics over refugees and asylums seekers are not only stable but also global: the prevailing calculus is 'Muslims equal terrorists' (Welch 2012, xi), and the Muslim-terrorist-refugee is considered a 'transnational folk devil' (Morgan and Poynting 2012, 1). Accordingly, such moral panics have been considered an aspect of the rise of 'global Islamophobia', which certainly did not begin with 9/11, 'but since then has expanded rapidly to reshape the politics of multiculturalism in various societies' (Morgan and Poynting 2012, 1; see also Morgan, Dagistanli, and Martin 2010).

As with other global processes, these developments have local manifestations. Indeed, the 'war on terror' affected Australia in a particularly dramatic way when, just over a year after 9/11, on 12 October 2002, the Bali bombings killed 202 people, 88 of whom were Australian. In the event, the region once demarcated as the 'arc of instability' became an 'arc of insecurity', and, in the process, fear of Asia morphed into 'the imperative to

insulate Australia from the “menaces” on every side’ (Perera 2009a, 96). The Cronulla riot, mentioned earlier, was one internal reaction to this altered geopolitical landscape.

The ubiquity of refugee moral panics, however, is not confined to the demonization of the Muslim-terrorist-refugee as a transnational folk devil. Coinciding with the ‘No Visa’ campaign of the Labor government in Australia, the British government launched its own anti-migrant campaign, hiring vans (Figure 6) that toured six London boroughs, carrying the words, ‘In the UK illegally? Go home or face arrest’. Although the debate about immigration in the UK has, like Australia, been impacted by the ‘war on terror’, also like Australia, the issues there have a particular regional flavour relating, among other things, to the European union.

Fighting back

While a key feature of moral panics is the attempt at the formation of a consensus, it would be folly to suggest this is typical of all reactions to asylum seekers in Australia. Indeed, the conflict described here indicates a moral panic may contain an ensemble of competing voices and interests, all seeking to influence public debate and government action. For instance, research conducted by Mummery and Rodan (2007) has shown how attitudes towards refugees in Australia are ‘binarized’ along lines of ‘protectivism’ and ‘humanitarianism’, both of which ‘shore up particular notions of Australian national identity’ (Mummery and Rodan 2007, 348). Protectivist discourse frames Australianness negatively, whereby ‘being Australian means *not* being or doing certain things’, such as *not* throwing your children overboard, which is regarded un-Australian (Mummery and Rodan 2007, 350, original emphasis). Humanitarian discourse, by contrast, positively affirms Australianness, which is metonymic for giving people a ‘fair go’.



Figure 6. ‘Go home’ van in the UK. *Source:* Sparrow (2013). © Rick Findler.

The existence of divergent opinions about asylum seekers not only challenges the notion that moral panics are necessarily consensual, but it also raises the prospect of resisting moral panics. As McRobbie and Thornton (1995, 566) note, folk devils themselves can and sometimes do ‘fight back’. Although research indicates there is a strong ‘media effect’ or relationship between media representations and audience constructions of asylum seekers, which largely constructs them as ‘illegitimate’ and a ‘problem’ (Pearce and Charman 2011), some social reactions to refugees have been questioned and resisted. If that happens, moral panic might be met with what James Jasper (1997, 106) calls ‘moral shock’, which is ‘when an unexpected event or piece of information raises such a sense of outrage in a person that she becomes inclined toward political action’. Accordingly, human rights activists in Britain have sought to ‘confront governmental and media claims about the threats of asylum seekers, attempting to create a more informed public consciousness’ (Welch and Schuster 2005, 403; see also Cohen 1972/2002, xxi; Tazreiter 2010). Hence, in a riposte to the British government’s ‘Go Home’ vans, campaign group, Liberty, launched its own van (Figure 7).

In a similar culture jamming move, a group of ‘middle-class Aussie taxpayers [...] funded their own political campaign posters designed to point out the “hypocrisy” of Kevin Rudd’s asylum seeker policy’ (Porter 2013). The three metre tall posters (Figure 8) which appeared on Sydney’s main thoroughfare, George Street, over one weekend, were reminiscent of images designed for the 2001 ‘We are the Boat People’ campaign (see Elder 2007, 128), for they too featured a picture of *HMS Endeavour*, thus serving as a reminder of the original invasion – euphemistically called ‘settlement’ or ‘arrival’ (Perera 2009a, 105) – on 26 January 1788 of unauthorized boats containing ‘true illegals: sent here by English courts for a range of criminal offences’ (Burnside 2013).



Figure 7. Liberty van. Source: Walker (2013). © Dan Kitwood/Getty Images.



Figure 8. Poster parodying the Australian government's 'no visa' campaign. *Source:* Porter (2013). © Dean Sewell/Andrew Quilty/Nic Walker/Jake Lloyd Jones/Jess Miller.

These examples suggest that just as the negative social reaction to refugees and asylum seekers has been relatively persistent, so too has been the dissent. And, here, we can use the concept of 'abeyance' (mentioned earlier) in its more conventional social movement theory sense, albeit that in the case of moral panics over boat people, rather than being suspended, resistance comes to the fore in a politically hostile environment. This might be explained by the fact that the fighting back or resistance is not being done by the targets of the hostility themselves, but by refugee advocates who have sufficient cultural and political capital to enable them to intervene in public discourse about boat people.

Conclusion

Notwithstanding some points of disruption and resistance, moral panics over refugees and asylum seekers appear to refute Garland's (2008, 16–18) idea that media proliferation and political fragmentation provide for a shift from consensual moral panics to conflictual culture wars. For, as this article has shown, moral panics over

asylum seekers and refugees, of which the Australian case is but an example, contain key elements of a classic moral panic, including a strong moral dimension, and a broadly shared set of societal values, which are disturbed by the conduct of a 'deviant' group. The societal reaction also demonstrates a continuing and extreme power imbalance between a mighty nation-state (coupled with a powerful mass media) pitted against highly vulnerable refugees seeking asylum from war, injustice and persecution.

All the more reason, argues Joanna Zylinska (2004a), for cultural studies to develop an ethical approach that seeks to engage with moral panics in 'a corrected version of morality'. She is critical of Cohen's original study for being more about politics than about morality, going so far as to say that 'there is something rather *unethical* [...] about his disavowal of ethics' (Zylinska 2004a, original emphasis). Applying Judith Butler's ideas on the ethics of recognition to the treatment of asylum seekers in Britain, Zylinska (2004b, 530–531) argues we should 'create a possibility for a new politics of immigration, a politics that is informed by an ethics of response and responsibility that goes beyond the set of moral obligations'. Such a 'responsible immigration politics' (Zylinska 2004b, 531) might start by recognizing the:

blind spot in the rhetoric and politics of the sovereign government that does not see a connection between Iraqi *refugees* from their own country, whose lives are threatened by Western bombs, and the Iraqi *asylum seekers trying to come into* Britain, (Zylinska 2004b, 530, original emphasis)

Given Australia too has been an active participant in the post-9/11 'coalition of the willing', the same level of responsibility must surely apply to asylum seekers arriving off its shores by boat or otherwise.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

Notes on contributor

Greg Martin is a Senior Lecturer in Socio-Legal Studies at the University of Sydney, Australia. His research interests include cultural criminology, criminal law, policing, 'secret justice' and social movements. His recent books include *Understanding Social Movements* (Routledge 2015), and a co-edited collection entitled, *Secrecy, Law and Society* (Routledge 2015).

References

- Aas, K. F. 2007. "Analysing a World in Motion: Global Flows Meet 'Criminology of the Other'." *Theoretical Criminology* 11 (2): 283–303.
- Agamben, G. 2005. *State of Exception*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Anderson, B. 1983. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso.
- Australian Broadcasting Association. 2011. "Interview with Former Prime Minister of Australia." , John. Howard, for Midday presented by Margaret Throsby on ABC Classic FM, 6 December 2011. <http://www.abc.net.au/classic/content/2011/12/06/3382247.htm>
- Banham, C., and M. Metherell. 2002. "Inquiry damns Reith's 'Deliberate Distortion'." *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 October 2002. <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2002/10/23/1034561551232.html>
- Bauman, Z. 2004. *Wasted Lives: Modernity and its Outcasts*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Belford, A. 2012. "Desperate To Leave The Deathtrap Of Quetta." *The Global Mail*, 12 December 2012. <http://www.theglobalmail.org/feature/desperate-to-leave-the-deathtrap-of-quetta/518/>
- Bennett, J. 2012. *Practical Aesthetics: Events, Affect and Art After 9/11*. London: I.B. Tauris.

- Benson, S., L. Novak, and L. Scarr. 2013. "Tony Abbott's Strategy to Kiss Boats Goodbye." *The Daily Telegraph*, 17 August 2013. <http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/tony-abbott8217s-strategy-to-kiss-boats-goodbye/story-fni0cx12-1226698790308>
- Billig, M. 1995. *Banal Nationalism*. London: Sage.
- Burnside, J. 2013. "Alienation to Alien Nation." *The Conversation*, 19 September 2013. <http://theconversation.com/julian-burnside-alienation-to-alien-nation-18290>
- Clark, T. 2009. "UK Travellers Overstaying their Australian Visas 'Because they're Having Too Much Fun'." *Mail Online*, 21 October 2009. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-1221929/UK-gap-year-tourists-overstaying-Australian-visa-theyre-having-fun.html>
- Cohen, S. 1972. *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*. 3rd ed. London: Routledge.
- Cohen, S. 2011. "Whose Side Are We On? The Undeclared Politics of Moral Panic Theory." *Crime Media Culture* 7 (3): 237–243.
- Cover, R. 2013. "Undoing Attitudes: Subjectivity and Ethical Change in the *Go Back to Where You Came From* Documentary." *Continuum* 27 (3): 408–420.
- Elder, C. 2003. "Invaders, Illegals and Aliens: Imagining Exclusion in a 'White Australia'." *Law Text Culture* 7: 221–250.
- Elder, C. 2007. *Being Australian: Narrative of National Identity*. Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin.
- Flynn, M., and R. LaForgia. 2002. "Australia's Pacific Solution to Asylum Seekers." *LAWASIA Journal* 2002: 31–43.
- Galligan, B., and J. Chesterman. 1999. "Australia's Citizenship Void." In *Globalization and Citizenship in the Asia-Pacific*, edited by A. Davidson and K. Weekley, 73–86. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Garland, D. 2007. "Moral Panics Then and Now." *British Academy Review* 10: 4–5. <http://www.britac.ac.uk/events/2007/moral-panic/index.cfm>
- Garland, D. 2008. "On the Concept of Moral Panic." *Crime Media Culture* 4 (1): 9–30.
- Geoghegan, T. 2005. "The British Illegal Immigrants." *BBC News*. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/4226949.stm
- Goode, E., and N. Ben-Yehuda. 1994. *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Guild, E. 2009. *Security and Migration in the 21st Century*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hall, S., C. Critcher, T. Jefferson, J. Clarke, and B. Robert. 1978. *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order*. London: Macmillan.
- Hope, A. N. 2012. "Christmas Island Tragedy." Inquest Findings (Ref No: 37/07), Coroner's Court of Western Australia, 23 February 2012 http://www.coronerscourt.wa.gov.au/1/inquest_findings.aspx?uid=9349-4756-3915-2531
- Horne, D. 1964. *The Lucky Country*. London: Penguin.
- Howard, J. 2003. "Australians at war." *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 November 2003. <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2003/11/11/1068329515951.html>
- Howard, J. 2009. "Liberal Rule: The Politics That Changed Australia." Special Broadcasting Series (Director: Nick Torrens).
- Jabour, B. 2013a. "Immigration Department Launches Ad Campaign to Back up Asylum Policy." *The Guardian*, 19 July 2013. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/19/immigration-department-asylum-seekers-advertising>
- Jabour, B. 2013b. "Immigration Department Spends \$2.5m on Week of Asylum Ads." *The Guardian*, 22 July 2013. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/22/immigration-department-2m-asylum-ads>
- Jasper, J. M. 1997. *The Art of Moral Protest: Culture, Biography and Creativity in Social Movements*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Jewkes, Y. 2011. *Crime and Media*. 2nd ed Los Angeles: Sage.
- Kemp, M., and P. Mickelborough. 2011. "58,000 Illegal Immigrants in Australia Have Arrived by Plane." *The Advertiser*, 21 November 2011. <http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/illegal-immigrants-arrive-by-plane/story-e6frea6u-1226200568050>
- Laughland, O. 2014. "Australian Government Targets Asylum Seekers with Graphic Campaign." *The Guardian*, 11 February 2014 <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/11/government-launches-new-graphic-campaign-to-deter-asylum-seekers>
- Liberal Party TV. 2013. "Kevin Rudd: The Facts He Wants You To Forget." <http://www.liberal.org.au/ruddfacts/>

- Marr, D. 2007. "His Master's Voice: The Corruption of Public Debate Under Howard." *Quarterly Essay* 26.
- McIver, D. 2009. "Representing Australianness: Our National Identity Brought to You by Today Tonight." *Media International Australia, Incorporating Culture & Policy* 131: 46–56.
- McMaster, D. 2001. *Asylum Seekers: Australia's Response to Refugees*. Carlton South: Melbourne University Press.
- McRobbie, A., and S. L. Thornton. 1995. "Rethinking Moral Panic for Multi-Mediated Social Worlds British." *Journal of Sociology* 46 (4): 559–574.
- Mickelburgh, P. 2011. "Enough Illegals to Populate a City: 60,000 – and Most of Them are Brits and Americans." *Herald Sun*, 21 November 2011. <http://www.news.com.au/national-news/taxpayers-wear-burden-of-60000-illegal-immigrants/story-e6frfkvr-1226200664868>
- Mogelson, L. 2013. "The Dream Boat." *The New York Times Magazine*, 15 November 2013. http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/17/magazine/the-impossible-refugee-boat-lift-to-christmas-island.html?_r=0
- Morgan, G., S. Dagistanli, and G. Martin. 2010. "Global Fears, Local Anxiety: Policing, Counterterrorism and Moral Panic Over Bkie Gang Wars in New South Wales." *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 43 (3): 580–599.
- Morgan, G., and S. Poynting, eds. 2012. *Global Islamophobia: Muslims and Moral Panic in the West*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Mummery, J., and D. Rodan. 2007. "Discursive Australia: Refugees, Australianness, and the Australian Public Sphere." *Continuum* 21 (3): 347–360.
- Noble, G. 2012. "Where's the Moral in Moral Panic? Islam, Evil and Moral Turbulence." In *Global Islamophobia: Muslims and Moral Panic in the West*, edited by G. Morgan and S. Poynting, 214–231. Farnham: Ashgate.
- O'Sullivan, M. 2011. "Malaysia Solution: High Court ruling explained." *The Conversation*, 31 August 2011. <https://theconversation.com/malaysia-solution-high-court-ruling-explained-3154>
- Pearce, J. M., and E. Charman. 2011. "A Social Psychological Approach to Understanding Moral Panic." *Crime Media Culture* 7 (3): 293–311.
- Perera, S. 2009a. *Australia and the Insular Imagination: Beaches, Borders, Boats and Bodies*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Perera, S. 2009b. "White Shores of Longing: 'Impossible Subjects' and the Frontiers of Citizenship." *Continuum* 23 (5): 647–662.
- Pilger, J. 2013. "Australia's 'Stop the Boats' Policy is Cynical and Lawless." *The Guardian*, 30 July 2013. <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jul/29/australia-gulag-votes-aboriginal-concentration-camps>
- Porter, C. 2013. "Taxpayers Fund Their Own Asylum Seeker Parody Posters." *The Daily Telegraph*, 5 August 2013. <http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/technology/news/taxpayers-fund-their-own-asylum-seeker-parody-posters/story-fni0bzoc-1226691371576>
- Poynting, S. 2006. "What Caused the Cronulla Riot?" *Race & Class* 48 (1): 85–92.
- Poynting, S., G. Noble, P. Tabar, and J. Collins. 2004. *Bin Laden in the Suburbs: Criminalising the Arab Other*. Sydney: Sydney Institute of Criminology.
- Price, E., and A. Nethery. 2012. "Truth-Telling at the Border: An Audience Appraisal of Border Security." *Media International Australia, Incorporating Culture & Policy* 142: 148–156.
- Reilly, A., and R. LaForgia. 2013. "Secret 'Enhanced Screening' of Asylum Seekers." *Alternative Law Journal* 38 (3): 143–146.
- Rudd, K. 2008. *Hansard Parliamentary Debates*, Commonwealth of Australia, House of Representatives, No. 1, Wednesday 13 February 2008. pp. 167–173.
- Sparrow, A. 2013. "'Go home' Campaign Against Illegal Immigrants Could Go Nationwide." *The Guardian*, 29 July 2013. <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2013/jul/29/go-home-campaign-illegal-immigrants>
- Taylor, V. 1989. "Social Movement Continuity: The Women's Movement in Abeyance." *American Sociological Review* 54 (5): 761–775.
- Tazreiter, C. 2010. "Local to Global Activism: The Movement to Protect the Rights of Refugees and Asylum Seekers." *Social Movement Studies* 9 (2): 201–214.
- Toohy, P. 2014. "That Sinking Feeling: Asylum Seekers and the Search for the Indonesian Solution." *Quarterly Essay* 53.
- Tsiolkas, C. 2013. "Strangers at the Gate: Making Sense of Australia's Fear of Asylum Seekers." *The Monthly*, September 2013 22–31.

- Walker, P. 2013. "Home Office "Go Home" drive on illegal immigrants faces Liberty riposte." *The Guardian*, 7 August 2013. <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2013/aug/06/go-home-office-immigration-liberty>
- Welch, M. 2012. "Foreword." In *Global Islamophobia: Muslims and Moral Panic in the West*, edited by G. Morgan and S. Poynting, ix–xiv. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Welch, M., and L. Schuster. 2005. "Detention of Asylum Seekers in the UK and USA." *Punishment & Society* 7 (4): 397–417.
- Winterton, G. 2003. "The Limits and Use of Executive Power by Government." *Federal Law Review* 31 (3): 421–444.
- Young, J. 2005. "Moral Panics, Margate and Mary Poppins: Mysterious Happenings in South Coast Seaside Towns." *Crime Media Culture* 1 (1): 100–105.
- Zylinska, J. 2004a. "The Universal Acts: Judith Butler and the Biopolitics of Immigration." *Cultural Studies* 18 (4): 523–537.
- Zylinska, J. 2004b. "Guns n' Rappers: Moral Panics and the Ethics of Cultural Studies." *Culture Machine* 6. <http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/viewArticle/7/6>